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Book Festival Authors Appeal to Kids of All Ages



Michaela McNichol

Children of all ages enjoy listening to authors and meeting their favorite storybook characters at the 2007 National Book Festival.

By Audrey Fischer

Children and teens attending the National Book Festival on Sept. 29 could choose to hear from any one of more than 20 authors, whose styles and themes ranged from light entertainment and fantasy to the darker side of reality.

From three-time Caldecott-winner David Wiesner's wordless picture book "Flotsam" to Newbery Medal-winner Patricia MacLachlan's beloved chapter book and television movie "Sarah, Plain and Tall," from Gene Luen Yang's graphic novel "American Born Chinese" to Jennifer Holm's "Middle School is Worse Than Meatloaf," the authors appealed to young readers of all ages.

Advocates of reading and literacy had a message for parents. "If you are here with a young child, you are doing a wonderful job!" said Marcia Davis, features editor at The Washington Post, a charter sponsor of the National Book Festival.

Some authors and illustrators aimed to spark an interest in books at a very young age. Judith Schachner entertained toddlers in the audience with a balloon representation of Skippyjon, protagonist of her series of books about a Siamese cat.

Rosemary Wells engaged children by discussing her bunny sibling series "Max and Ruby" while appealing to the adults in their lives.

"Read to a child for 20 minutes each day," said Wells, who spearheaded a national campaign for early literacy called "Read to Your Bunny, the Most Important Twenty Minutes of Your Day."

Wells, who is passionate on the sub-

Celebrities Cook Up Day of Entertainment at Book Festival

By Erin Allen, with Helen Dalrymple and Donna Urschel

A veritable pantheon of authors was cooking up something good in the Home and Family pavilion at the Library's seventh National Book Festival on Sept. 29, as evidenced by the festivalgoers' seemingly insatiable appetite for what they had to offer.

A "chef's block" of back-to-back presentations by culinary experts Steven Raichlen, Cat Cora, Ann Amernick and Joan Nathan was a highlight of the afternoon. Also on the menu were talks by authors Victoria Rowell, Judith Martin, Dr. Sanjay Gupta, Doro Bush Koch and Martha Raddatz.

Greeting the audience with a joke about his tie, noted barbecue expert Steven Raichlen launched into his version of barbecue history 101.

"Three hundred million years ago, man cooks his own dinner. This was a new phenomenon—roasted meat," he explained. "Talk about the first, greatest 'Aha' moment."

Barbecue has appeared throughout great moments in the nation's history, from a celebration of laying the Capitol Building's foundation to the invention of backyard charcoal grilling, thanks to wood scraps left over from making Model T Fords. This culinary pastime has even

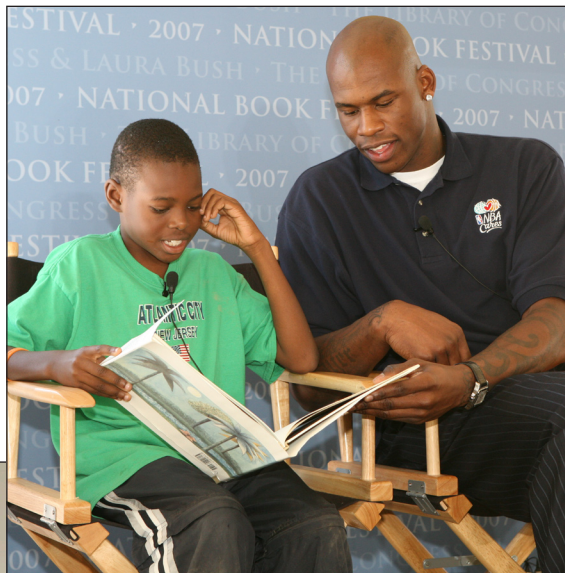
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NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL - CHILDREN AND TEENS

Golden State Warrior Al Harrington reads aloud in the Children's pavilion as part of the NBA/WNBA's "Read to Achieve" program.

Three-time Caldecott-winner David Wiesner, below, discusses his wordless picture book "Flotsam."



Michaela McNichol



Rosemary Wells tells parents to read daily to their children.

Michaela McNichol



Barry Wheeler



Michaela McNichol

Sam Renick and "Sammy, the Saver Rabbit" teach children about money management.

KIDS OF ALL AGES, Continued from page 1

ject of literacy and the benefits of reading aloud to children, continued: "It must be done regularly like brushing your teeth. Do it every day, on weekends, holidays, when your mother-in-law comes to visit, when you get a serious diagnosis from the doctor." Wells has received letters from hundreds of people attesting to the difference this practice can make in the lives of children.

Basketball players Al Harrington and Ruth Riley echoed this message by representing the NBA/WNBA's "Read to Achieve" literacy promotion program.

"One of the great things about reading is that you can go on an adventure without leaving the house," said Riley, who enlisted members of the audience to read aloud from Maurice Sendak's "Where the Wild Things Are."

Harrington introduced children to Peter H. Reynolds' book "The Dot," about a child who comes to believe she can draw after all.

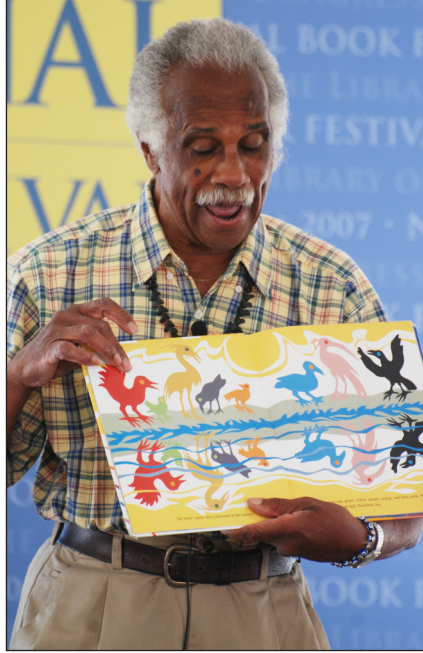
"Just because you aren't the best at something, doesn't mean you'll never improve," said Harrington. "You must continue to strive."

For its part, the Library of Congress Federal Credit Union championed the

cause of financial literacy. Author and lyricist Sam Renick educated and entertained children in the "Let's Read America" pavilion by reciting his book titled "Sammy, the Saver Rabbit." Accompanied by the oversized bunny himself, Renick delivered the message that "saving is a great habit."

In the African oral tradition of reading stories aloud, Jan Spivey Gilchrist and Ashley Bryan recited several poems by Langston Hughes and Eloise Greenfield. Bryan, who demonstrated the power of voice, inflection and rhythm to tell a story, explained that many African tales have since been written down and

NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL - CHILDREN AND TEENS



Maria Celeste Arrarás, far left, reads her book "The Magic Cane" followed by questions from young readers, such as this young lady at the microphone (below) with the Spanish version in hand.

Ashley Bryan, left, reads his book "My America," which was co-illustrated with Jan Spivey Gilchrist.



Michaela McNichol

Kristina Nixon

Michaela McNichol

illustrated. They then proceeded to read Gilchrist's poem "My America," which she and Bryan illustrated in their distinctly different styles. Bryan summed up the multicultural message.

"People from all over the world made the United States the unique culture it is today," he said. "It's the best of ourselves."

Combining her Cuban and Southern heritage into an accent all her own, Carmen Agra Deedy brought a traditional Cuban folktale to life. In true storyteller fashion, Deedy presented an animated rendition of her latest children's book "Martina, the Beautiful Cockroach." The book has also been translated into Spanish and published under the title "*Martina, la cucarachita muy linda.*"

"She's a cheeky little cockroach," said Deedy about her main character who has to follow some strange advice from her *abuela* (grandmother) on her search for a husband.

Complete with wacky voices for each character and movements across the



Nancy Altaro

Gene Luen Yang, left, signs books for festival-goers.

stage, Deedy engaged the audience, which followed along excitedly.

After a standing ovation from the audience, Deedy advised the parents to "go home and tell stories to your *niños* and *niñas*, to your boys and girls."

Well-known known for her role as host of Telemundo's "*Al Rojo Vivo*," Maria Celeste Arrarás transported her audience into a magical world with her first children's book, "The Magic Cane." (The book has also been published in Spanish as "*El baston magico.*")

"I wanted to write something that was all about imagination," she said.

"The Magic Cane" centers around

a family of three siblings with special powers who join forces to fight the evil Emperor Moconoco. In the story, good combats evil, and family togetherness is everything.

Arrarás spoke candidly about the influence that her own three children had on her writing.

"I hope my kids get the message not to fight anymore," she quipped. "They can find true happiness and fight evil when all three are together."

Arrarás let the crowd in on an inside joke. Her youngest son suggested that the evil emperor be called "Moconoco" because *moco* means booger in Spanish.

NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL - CHILDREN AND TEENS



Nancy Allario

Mercer Mayer signs the 2007 National Book Festival poster, which features his illustration.



Michaela McNichol

Above, from left, Wendy Lopez and Shameeza Singh of Scholastic Inc. read to children in Spanish and English.



Michaela McNichol

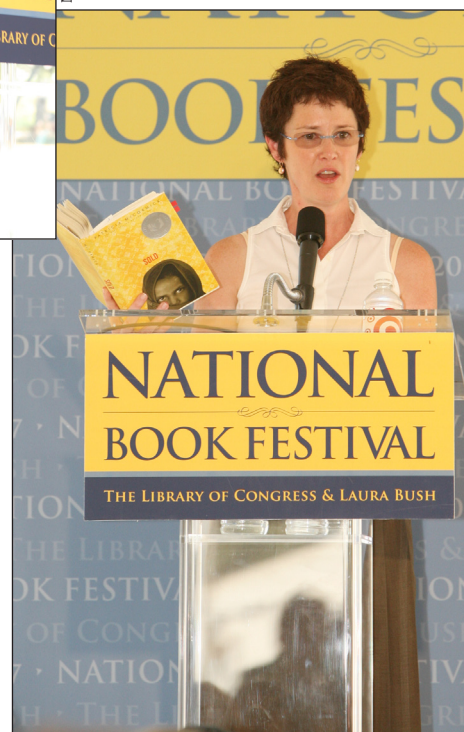
Festival-goer David Conley reads to son Alex, 5, and daughter Claire, 3. This family lives in Gainesville, Fla.



Michaela McNichol

Patricia MacLachlan, left, discusses her popular book and television movie, "Sarah, Plain and Tall."

Patricia McCormick, below, reads from her young-adult book "Sold."



Michaela McNichol

"My son said it to be obnoxious but it ended up being the perfect name for an evil emperor!"

Several authors of young-adult fiction discussed works with decidedly darker themes. Patricia MacLachlan's "Journey" deals with a children trying to come to grips with the fact that their mother has deserted the family. By design, the book does not have the stereotypical happy ending.

"Families are different and mothers don't always come home," said MacLachlan. "Children have taken this as realistic

for them and I'm proud of that." Human trafficking and self-mutilation are subjects that Patricia McCormick deals with in her young adult books "Sold" and "Cut."

"My books are pieces of activism, not just art," she explained. She donates part of the proceeds of her books to help eradicate these social ills.

"There are kindness and a whole range of human experience to be found in rehab or in brothel," she explained.

M. T. Anderson is still amazed that, in today's market, "The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing," his 900-page, two-

NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL - CHILDREN AND TEENS



Shelia Moses, left, signs books and poses with a young fan.

Right, a toddler in a red shirt befriends Clifford the Big Red Dog.



Jessica Nogan, above, from Gaithersburg, Md., listens to author Jennifer Holm.

A woman assists her twins at a computer in the Let's Read America pavilion.

volume work for young adults, set in the Revolutionary War era and written in 18th century language, found a publisher (Candlewick). For the author who has written books set in the present and the future, this leap into historical fiction is rooted in his childhood. Anderson, who grew up in a small Massachusetts town not far from the place that Paul Revere warned of the impending British invasion, first became aware of the local history when President Ford visited on April 18, 1975, to celebrate the bicentennial of this historic event.

"What would my father or I have done if we were living here back then?" he recalled wondering at the time.

Like Anderson's futuristic work "Feed," which is a satire of corporate America and the way it pumps a steady stream of information into our brains, "Octavian" is also a social commentary – on power,

influence and slavery. Based on real life events, the book also deals with what Anderson calls "an insane Enlightenment experiment" to test the effects of the pox on African Americans.

These are dark themes, and they are finding an audience among today's youth whose lives are complicated.

"Young-adult authors must be at the top of their game," said McCormick. "They're competing with the iPod and instant messaging."

Children, teens and educators unable to attend the National Book Festival in Washington, D.C., can access a new feature on the Library's Web site, the Young Readers' Toolkit at www.loc.gov/book-fest/toolkit. The site provides a wealth of information about the participating authors and their books. They can learn how to host their own book festival. They can create flash cards and bookmarks

and even download the festival poster by author and illustrator Mercer Mayer, who also appeared at the festival. And they can celebrate the achievements of other young people who have been recognized for their reading, writing and artistic abilities in contests such as River of Words and Letters About Literature.

The six national winners of the Letters About Literature contest, sponsored jointly by the Library and Target, read their winning essays in the Teens and Children's pavilion. (See story on page 8) This was the culmination of their trip to Washington, which included a visit to the White House and the Library of Congress.

"When the Library's Jefferson Building opened in 1897, it was called 'the book palace of the American people,'" Librarian of Congress James H. Billington told the crowd, quoting Ainsworth Rand Spofford, the sixth Librarian of Congress (1864-1897).

Perhaps the children who attended the 2007 National Book Festival will be inspired to add their own published tomes to the Library's shelves.

— Raquel Maya, an intern in the Library's Public Affairs Office, contributed to this story. ♦

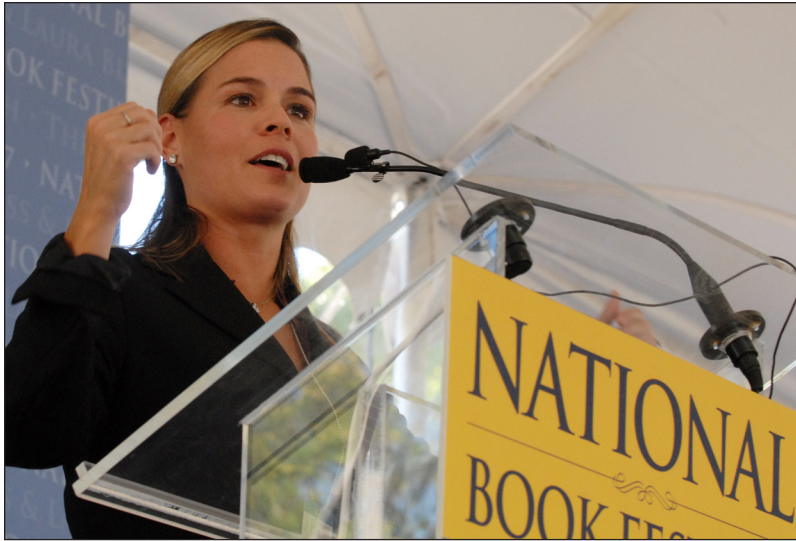
Michaela McNichol

Nancy Alfano

Michaela McNichol

Michaela McNichol

NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL - HOME AND FAMILY



Iron Chef Cat Cora discusses "Cooking from the Hip."



Pastry chef Ann Amernick, above, discusses her philosophy of baking. Left, barbecue king Steven Raichlen charts the history of grilling meat.

HOME and FAMILY, Continued from page 1
appeared in great works of literature.

"For many of you in the audience, barbecue is a religion," said Raichlen.

For the Greeks and Romans, barbecue literally was religion. "In 'The Iliad,' Homer refers to a ceremony in which the Greeks sacrificed an ox and the congregants ate the meat. What you have in this classic work of literature is a 2,500-year-old barbecue recipe," Raichlen said.

Although she is not a grill master, Cat Cora, the first female Iron Chef on the Food Network's "Iron Chef America" show, can whip up a menu of diverse and delectable dishes featuring the same ingredient in just 60 minutes. This culinary energy spilled over during her talk, as she discussed her new cookbook "Cooking from the Hip."

"Cooking from the Hip' is about going with what you have on hand in your pantry," she said. "It's also a philosophy about seasonality, quality over quantity and sharing time with family and friends."

In discussing the highly rated "Iron Chef America," the pint-sized gourmet admitted she looks taller on TV. In this real-time show, she and the other Iron Chefs—Bobby Flay, Mario Batali and Masaharu Morimoto—have one hour to prepare an entire menu based on one key "secret" ingredient they do not know until the show begins.



"You really have to be able to think on your feet," Cora said. "'Iron Chef' is the hardest thing we do."

Following Cora was Ann Amernick, executive chef and co-owner of Palena in the District and a former White House assistant pastry chef. She admitted she didn't have much of a speech prepared. She said her book "The Art of the Desert" was like an autobiography: "I feel like everything in this book goes back to my childhood."

A former elementary school teacher, Amernick said she never expected to be a pastry chef, although one of her favorite books as a child was about a French poodle that wanted to be one.

"When I first started out [as a pastry chef], even then I was about making desserts different from what I was tasting at the time," she said. "Most of the res-

taurants were buying premade desserts from somewhere else. I thought it was important to bake in the restaurant."

As she moved from restaurant to restaurant, she not only gained business experience but also built up her repertoire.

"The thread through it all was, and still is, to keep the quality and make sure people understand what they are tasting," she said.

When Joan Nathan took the podium, she described an "Aha" moment of her own. "A few years ago, my daughters called me and told me I had arrived. The cover of my book 'Jewish Cooking in America' was featured on 'Sex and the City' for about 35 seconds."

Her new book, "The New American Cooking," focuses on the "stew pot" that is American cuisine. "What I tried to do in this book was to show changes, like immigration, the rise of the celebrity chef and the rise of sustainable food and good agriculture," she said.

Part cookbook and part travelogue, "The New American Cooking" features recipes and stories from the chefs, farmers, artisans and entrepreneurs she visited—from Marion Spear, a herbalist and experienced home brewer in Arkansas, to Ed Ledoux, the "father of California pizza."

NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL - HOME AND FAMILY

“I just wanted to highlight people like that,” Nathan said. “These people are amazing cooks and very giving.”

Paying homage to amazing people of her own was Victoria Rowell, whose book “The Women Who Raised Me” honors the “extraordinary Americans who commit themselves to taking care of someone else’s children.” Now an Emmy Award-nominated actress and accomplished ballet dancer, Rowell’s childhood was less than stable; she grew up in the foster care system, bouncing from home to home until she was 18.

“Everything is important when you grow up rootless,” she said. “I treasure everything I received from the women who raised me. My inheritance was their wisdom.”

Rowell went on to read an excerpt from her book about her second foster mother and primary caretaker, Agatha Wooten Armstead or “Ma,” who raised her from age 2 to her early teens on a 60-acre farm in West Lebanon, Maine.

“Through her I was given a foundation of what was important—merit and study, hard work, investment in property and people, humility and laughter,” she said.

On a more somber note, Martha Raddatz, chief White House correspondent for ABC News who has been to Iraq 14 times during the past four years, talked about the effect of the war on the soldiers’ families.

“The families go into combat mode and they don’t get credit for it,” said Raddatz, who wrote “A Long Road Home: A Story of War and Family.”

Raddatz’s book revolves around an April 4, 2004, battle in Sadr City. An Army platoon of the 1st Cavalry Division was sent on a routine patrol in Baghdad’s Shiite neighborhood of Sadr City when suddenly the soldiers were ambushed and a brutal firefight ensued. In two hours of fighting, eight soldiers died and 60 were wounded. Hundreds of Iraqis were killed.

“I sat down with these soldiers and asked them about their experiences. It was so powerful. They were so emotional. No one really asks soldiers what it was like. I was compelled by their bravery to ask more and find out more,” Raddatz said.



Nancy Alfano

Posing with their “favorite author,” Victoria Rowell, are, from left, Madison Hartzell, Ashley Marning and Jordyn Hall, all 12-year-old students of George Fox Middle School in Pasadena, Md.



Doug Barber

ABC News correspondent Martha Raddatz signs a program for a reader who enjoyed her book containing her interviews of U.S. soldiers in Iraq.

The soldiers, Raddatz realized, found it was easier to talk about the war to an interviewer than to their own spouses or family members. “They don’t want to share. They don’t want their loved ones to know what they’ve been going through. But I think it’s important for them to share their experiences,” she said.

Sharing her own experiences, not of war but of presidents, was Doro Bush Koch, sister of the current president of the United States and the daughter of a former president, George H.W. Bush, about whom she has just written a book titled “My Father, My President.”

Koch, who has four children and helps to raise money for literacy programs in Maryland, threw herself into the writing project. She combed through historical files and read personal letters that had been sent to the elder Bush. “They were

filled with stories about my dad,” she said, “but there were pieces missing.”

That’s when she decided to interview friends, colleagues, political appointees and others who could help fill in the picture of her father from a personal point of view. She conducted some 135 interviews for the book, including all of the living former presidents and most of the world leaders who were in office during the years of her father’s presidency, 1989 to 1993.

Koch read excerpts from her book that related some of the anecdotes she learned about her father, concluding with a story from the book by golfer Phil Mickelson, who told with amusement of the day he was boating with the former president in Maine and they ended up “crashing” a wedding that was taking place on shore.

NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL - HOME AND FAMILY



Nancy Alfaro



Nancy Alfaro

Annie Groer of The Washington Post made it very clear in her amusing introduction of Judith Martin—aka Miss Manners—that she had been behaving properly and that she was completely caught up on all of her condolence and thank-you notes.

That said, however, she introduced Martin's talk, not about manners but about Venice—"a place she first visited at age 14 and has loved ever since"—and her new book "No Vulgar Hotel/The Desire and Pursuit of Venice."

Martin described the attributes of historic Venice: It was a republic that engaged in global commerce; its laborers got health care and pensions; its citizens were "curious about the world, fun-loving, crazy about arts and crafts, and luxury-loving, champion consumers."

"How can we not love them," she exclaimed. "They're just like us!"

She described the history of the place she stays, a gothic palazzo that boasts a ceiling by the 18th-century painter Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. In it lived two doges (chief magistrates, one of whom killed the other and then was elected to fill the dead man's position), a saint and a couple of "wild beauties."

Martin concluded by saying that she didn't have any great desire to travel to other places. "Once I saw Venice, I thought, 'Why look around when you've found it.'"

The women in the audience were



Doug Barber

Authors, counterclockwise from left, are Doro Bush Koch, Dr. Sanjay Gupta and Judith Martin. Koch signs a book she wrote about her dad, George Herbert Walker Bush. Gupta poses with Alicia Duree and Stuart Geiger, who got stuck in a Metro train "for hours" trying to get to the festival to hear "our favorite brain surgeon/journalist/pirate/ninja." Martin explains her attraction to Venice, a place she has loved since she was 14.

clearly charmed by Dr. Sanjay Gupta, chief medical correspondent for CNN and one of People Magazine's "Sexiest Men Alive" in 2003. The debonair neurosurgeon presented tips for healthy living and answered questions on the age-old problem—how to age less.

"I traveled around the world and met people who were living longer and better lives," he said.

For example, in Okinawa exists the highest concentration of centenarians, he said. They eat lots of soy-based products, which not only lower bad cholesterol but also raise the good.

"Individual responsibility is at the core of the book," Gupta said. "We have not

developed a culture of prevention. We are a disease-treatment society instead of one about health and wellness."

Gupta offered a recipe for longevity: Eat seven different colored foods a day to ensure a proper diet of vitamins and minerals, add 5 to 10 minutes of upper-body training a day to help combat osteoporosis and raise metabolism, and have a sense of purpose in life, especially after 65, to increase initiative and vitality.

"I'd like us to live our lives like an incandescent light bulb," Gupta said. "We burn brightly for our whole lives and then just go out with no flicker in the end." ♦

NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL - CHILDREN AND TEENS

Books Change Lives of Young Readers

By Audrey Fischer

If the six winning essays in the 2006-2007 Letters About Literature competition are any indication, today's youth have weighty issues on their mind.

Selected from 56,000 entries nationwide, the winning letters to their favorite authors written by students in grades 5 through 12 deal with moving away from home, adoption, reading disabilities, Nazi Germany and the Middle East.

For Katja Martin, an elementary school student originally from Delaware, moving to Georgia meant "no chance of snow."

"No white blanket is dropped over the landscape to cover the leaves of fall," she wrote to Robert Frost, author of the poem "Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening."

"Your poem is all I have left to bring back that feeling of tranquility and simplicity," she continued. "Your poem is my winter. It's my snow in a small collection of words."

Elena Suglia, a middle schooler from Rhode Island, also found solace in a poem. Her letter to the unknown author of "Legacy of an Adopted Child" explained the impact of the verse on her self-esteem.

"Reading your poem that day made something inside me feel different. Before ... I was insecure and uncomfortable with my position of being adopted. I used to believe my birth mother was someone who didn't care about me and cast me away. Now, I know that I was wrong. In reality, she displayed a great deal of love and courage when she made that decision."

As "the worst reader in the school," Jordan Slisher, a middle schooler from South Carolina, also had suffered from poor self-esteem—until he mastered one of the Harry Potter books. When he was 5 years old, he sustained an eye injury that required four surgeries, making it difficult to read. Being teased by friends was bad enough, but the final straw was not being able to discuss the Harry Potter series with his peers.



John Y. Cole, Alexis Haaland, Audrey Keranen, Amber Jin, Jordan Slisher, Elana Suglia, Katja Martin, Mark Dominowski assemble for the reading of winning letters.

"I grabbed your book 'Harry Potter and Sorcerer's Stone' off the shelf," Slisher wrote to author J. K. Rowling. "Word by word, paragraph by paragraph, it took me about a month to read. . . . It was better than any dessert I could possible eat. When I did finally finish it, I felt I could climb any mountain, swim across the Atlantic Ocean, and most importantly, read any book I wanted to."

Today, Slisher happily reported, he is in an advanced English and Language Arts class with his friends.

The message in Mark Zusak's "The Book Thief" that you can save people with words was not lost on Alexis Haaland, an elementary school student from North Dakota. Set in Nazi Germany and narrated by Death, the book's dark themes helped her "realize we can change the effects of bad things that happen. . . . With Hitlers and Husseins prowling, we have to be careful."

"Liesel seemed to calm everyone down in the bomb shelter with her reading; she's literally saving lives with book," said Haaland, who considers sending her copy of "The Book Thief" to Iraq.

"I'm lucky enough to be living in a country where I can read any book I want," wrote Haaland to the book's author. "I even have enough money to buy (not steal) another copy of your life-changing book."

The atrocities endured by Elie Wiesel in Nazi Germany, as outlined in his memoir "Night," prompted Amber Jin, a high school student from Florida, to write to the author. Doubting that she could ever display Wiesel's courage, she realized that her mother, who had emigrated from China to the United States, was equally courageous.

"Alone, without the comfort of family or familiarity, she labored for three years before finally being able to bring me here to join her," wrote Lin.

Addressing Wiesel, she said: "In your memoir, you spoke of sons abandoning fathers and fathers abandoning sons and the courage that seems to abandon most, if not all, in the camps...Then I thought about my mother and what she would do...My mother would have the courage to face whatever odds for me; my mother's love would triumph over all."

NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL - CHILDREN AND TEENS



Doug Barber

Families with children are drawn to the National Book Festival, which kindles imagination and laughter.

Before moving from Washington, D.C., to the Midwest, Audrey Keranen was bombarded by stereotypes about Iowa. Perhaps that is why she has been troubled by America's perception of the Middle East since Sept. 11.

"When young people today hear the word 'Afghanistan,' certain images may come to mind: the Taliban, Osama bin Laden, veiled women, Muslim extremists," she wrote to Khalid Hosseini, author of "The Kite Runner."

After reading about pre-Taliban Afghanistan through the eyes of the protagonist, Amir, Keranen became enamored with Afghan culture.

"I was heartbroken to see the Afghanistan of the 1970s lose its flavor as the Taliban drove in with their tanks and pickup trucks," she wrote. "I no longer view it along stereotypical lines and have begun to associate this country with its population and culture, not the actions of a select few."

Not only did Keranen continue to read all she could about the Middle East, but she participated in a summer institute on



Michaela McNichol

Above, Mauricio Proaño and his daughters, Maria-Emilia, left, and Maria-Paula, follow along in Maria Celeste Arrarás's book as she reads.



Michaela McNichol

Middle Eastern culture.

"I have become motivated to learn about countries whose fates are inextricably tied to ours," wrote Keranen.

"Someday I would like to be the one who can encourage nations to set aside their differences and, in the words of Rahim Khan, find 'a way to be good again.'"

Next Year's Letters Due

Sponsored by Target, in association with the Center for the Book in the Library, the Letters About Literature essay contest gives young people the opportunity to express how books changed their lives.

The 2007 national winners each received a \$500 Target gift card and a trip to Washington to visit the White



Michaela McNichol

House and the Library of Congress and participate in the National Book Festival. Next year's national winners will receive a Reading Promotion Grant of \$10,000 for their school or community library and will be instrumental in deciding how the library funds will be spent.

The deadline for entries for the 2007-2008 competition is Dec. 14, 2007. To obtain the required entry coupon and a copy of "how to enter" guidelines, participants can visit the Letters About Literature Web site at www.loc.gov/letters or contact the national program director at lal@epix.net. ♦

NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL - CHILDREN AND TEENS



The Dirtmeister, "geologist extraordinaire," gives a science lesson outside the Scholastic Magic School Bus.

Michaela McNichol

The Penguin, below, keeps busy posing for pictures with young readers.



Michaela McNichol



Barry Wheeler

The Librarian, James H. Billington, greets some guests of the Junior League of Washington.



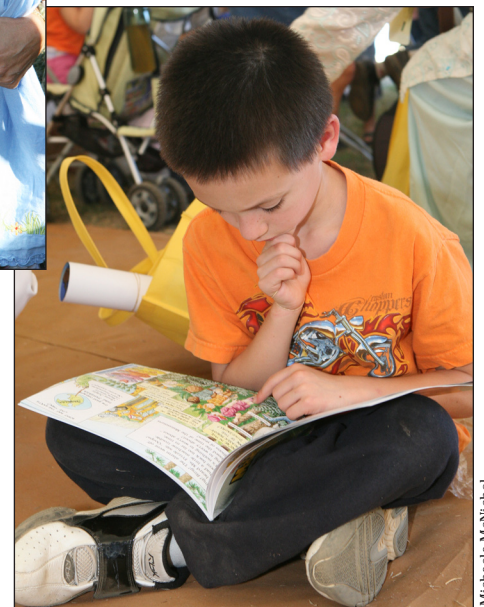
Michaela McNichol

Carmen Agra Deedy took time at the end of a long day to hug two little girls, fans of Deedy's new picture book.



Michaela McNichol

Scholastic's Miss Frizzle introduces herself to two young learners.



Michaela McNichol

Gerry Marvin, 8, from State College, Pa., reads "The Magic School Bus in the Time of Dinosaurs." This was his fourth festival.



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